I Wanna Hold Your Hand: Touch, Intimacy and Equality in Christopher Marlowe's "Hero and Leander" and George Chapman's "Continuation"

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Christopher Marlowe's poem Hero and Leander and George Chapman's Continuation thereof through a theoretical lens that includes theories of intimacy, sexuality and touch taken from Lee Edelman, Daniel Gil, James Bromley, Katherine Rowe and others. Hands are seen as the privileged organ of touch as well as synecdoche for human agency. Because it is all too often an unexamined sense, the theory of touch is dealt with in detail. The analysis of hands and touch leads to a discussion of how Marlowe's writing creates a picture of sexual intimacy that goes against traditional institutions and resists the traditional role of the couple in society. Marlowe's poem favors an equal, companionate intimacy that does not engage in traditional structures, while Chapman's Continuation to Marlowe's work serves to reaffirm the transgressive nature of Marlowe's poem by reasserting traditional social institutions surrounding the couple. Viewing the two pieces of literature together further supports the conclusion that Marlowe's work is transgressive because of how conservative Chapman's reaction to Hero and Leander is.

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CHAPTER 1

THESIS

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Introduction

Hands are, as body parts go, rather special. The hand creates, grasps, feels and touches, but is also deeply imbedded in our understanding of our relationship to the world around us and our understanding of what touch is and how it means. In the early modern period, the specialness of hands is related to the broad social changes that occurred during the time period especially in relation to the formation of the subject and the place and meaning of the couple in society. I shall turn to work on early modern anatomies, contemporary theories of touch and sexuality, and in particular to a detailed reading of Christopher Marlowe's poem, *Hero and Leander*, where hands and touch play a central role to his transgressive portrayal of intimacy. The hand and its particular synecdochal relationship to touch is fundamentally tied to the relationship between the body and the world around it. The hand is where we become aware of touching and, especially in literary representations of touch, the hand serves as synecdoche for the faculty of active touch. Through touch, the body is aware of itself and the self is aware of its body and corporeal existence. The body is, in

a way, created and limited by the faculty of touch; these limits are tested and redefined in turn through the experience of intimacy because of the level of contact that occurs between two separate bodies and selves. The experience of each body touching the other makes a new experience and creates a new understanding that neither had before.

Touch is important in sexual relationships of all kinds, but those sexual relationships which can be termed intimate are those where touch and the hand are particularly involved in meaning making. Intimacy also implicates society in personal experience and serves as a place where the individuals involved test and push the limits of social tradition and accepted modes of behavior. To be intimate with another person is to engage in a relationship which understands and values the selfhood of the other person and recognizes the self of the other as equal to oneself. As the OED states, to be intimate is to be "closely personal," "very familiar," and to be in touch with "the inmost nature or fundamental character" of something that is not oneself. Touch and intimacy exist at the limit of the body and society and therefore provide a rich site to examine the meaning of the body, its powers and society's attempts to limit a body's meaning-making capabilities with restrictive social structures.

Marlowe's poem may or may not have been finished, and many have speculated about Marlowe's intentions. However, instead of going down the speculative path that has been traced by others, I prefer to focus on what is an established fact about Marlowe's *Hero and* Leander*:* at least two contemporary poets, George Chapman and Henry Petowe, wrote continuations of Marlowe's

poem to make it fit the established story of Hero and Leander (Cheney 220, 268). George Chapman's continuation of the poem is the more well-known of the two, and is included in many standard editions of *Hero and Leander*. Upon reading Chapman's Continuation, it becomes clear that Marlowe and Chapman are not participating in the same poetic project. Whether or not Marlowe intended the poem to be finished, Chapman's continuation of the story serves to emphasize the ways in which Marlowe's poem portrays a transgressive type of sexuality and intimacy by forcing the story back into the traditional institutional structures of marriage and downplaying the vision of intimacy and equality of Marlowe's text. Marlowe's portrayal of the lovers, and especially his focus on their hands, shows them engaging each other on a level playing field where they share a common human existence, one that feels, touches, desires, and is intimate with the other.

The Hand, Intimacy and Sexuality

In *Hero and Leander*, the sameness and equality of Leander and Hero is emphasized through their bodies, and in particular their bodies touching. Touch is in itself a difficult category to examine. The sense of touch has, historically and culturally, been overlooked to a great extent. The main problem with understanding touch is that it is difficult to localize and to identify as particular. Hearing, tasting, and smelling are all easily perceived as discreet events by the subject. Seeing, and even more so, touching, are so pervasive to our experience of reality that the stimulus associated with them is more difficult to tease out

which makes the senses harder to describe, delineate and theorize. Mark M. Smith elaborates on this problem in his book, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, and Touching in History. He writes,*

> To be fair, I suspect that the historical study of touch has been slighted because of the difficulty in coming to terms with the sense. As Sander Gilman, one of the few historians to have done serious work on touch remarks, 'The study of touch is made difficult because it is at the same time the most complex and the most undifferentiated of the senses. .... according to Gilman, the skin 'is not only an organ of sense but it serves as the canvas upon which we "see" touch and its cultural associations.' (94)

Our flesh not only does the touching in our world, but also carries with it all the cultural meaning and associations of the sense. To touch something is not just to feel, but also to carry out a social or cultural act; the sense is unusually endowed with meaning. In *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies*, Mark Paterson comments on this phenomenon of sensing, saying," ... in the case of touch, our contact with things is erroneously perceived as direct, as unmediated" (17). He describes our understanding of touch as "erroneous" at two levels here, the first being that we do not think of it as having an input like taste/food, hearing/sound waves, etc, the second being that we do not always register that touch is embedded in social and cultural meaning (in many ways because of the first perception) so that it often goes unexamined. This second idea of touching/feeling is the one I feel pertains best to *Hero and*

Leander because of the extensive use of hands in Marlowe's poem; if touching is imbedded in meaning-making, then the touching and feeling in the poem must contribute to its meaning. The literary representations of touch in Marlowe's poem are the kind of representations of the kind of touch that is intentional, rather than all pervasive. These representations of touch also convey social meaning; this social meaning is not necessarily understood by the touchers themselves, but can be understood by the reader. The poem conveys the meaning of the intimacy between Hero and Leander through acts of touch, and it is in these acts that the companionate, equal nature of their relationship is shown to the reader and it is possible to examine how they do and do not participate in the institutional and traditional constructions of intimacy.

Marlowe's poem conveys Leander and Hero's experience of intimacy through moments of touch, especially the touching of hands which serve as synecdoche for their will, rather than through narrated self-reflection. Hands are given to Hero and Leander in their initial descriptions, and then it is the hands which are their first point of contact with each other. Over and over again, Marlowe describes Hero and Leander's hands, and it becomes obvious that touching, usually represented through hands, is central to an understanding of the poem. To fully understand the function of touch and of hands in the poem, we must first theorize what and how hands mean and what it means, or what it can mean to touch/feel. In her book, *Dead Hands*, Katherine Rowe looks at how and why the disembodied hand is such a powerful image throughout literature and through time. Before she embarks on her project she first provides an

outline of what the bodied hand is and does for us. She writes, “Across Western philosophical writings, particularly in the Aristotelian tradition, the hand is the preeminent bodily metaphor for human action” (Rowe x). This concept of the hand explains why hands are so important. We know, intuitively, that hands have meaning that other body parts do not when they act, and here we have a clear explanation of what we know without thinking about it. Our construct of the hand endows it with “human action” ; the hand is the bodily expression of our will and of social and cultural meaning which we may or may not be aware of. The hand has a set of particular attributes that are not given to other body parts, due in large part to the dismissal of touch as important. The hand is the expression of “the principle of rational organization; the capacity to express, manufacture, and possess; and the dependencies of mutual labor and layered agency” (Rowe xiii). The hand is not just understood as a body part; it is the link between what goes on inside our heads and what we do in the outside world. The hand allows us mastery over our environment, it enables us to apply order and rationality to our world and to create, make and adapt things to suit our purposes. The hand is what enacts our agency in the world.

By serving as the agent of touch in our understanding of touching, the hand comes to represent the social and cultural implications of touching/feeling and can therefore also be the active agent of resistance to these social and cultural implications. As the active touching body part, the hand is the seat of important action and links our bodies and everything they touch to the social implications of these actions. In her analysis of what Galen had to say about hands, Rowe

notes that

> First, the hand demonstrates the difference between human and animal bodies and proves the superiority of the former.... Second, the hand is linked by analogy as well as physiology to the faculty of reason: it is the instrument of reason and its material counterpart.... Third, hands are distinguished by their capacity for willed, effective action.... As the instrument of reason and volition, the muscular hand bridges the gap between spiritual and material motions. (6)

These aspects of the hand are important because they again explain what we know about the specialness of hands intuitively. What Galen observed, and Rowe summarized here is the explicit statement of our intuitive understanding. The hand is a privileged body part because it is what makes us different from the animals thereby what enables us to express our rational faculties and will. Hands then, in *Hero and Leander*, convey through touch an understanding of relationality on a level which is personally intimate, but not defined by social expectations of expressions of intimacy, such as the institution of marriage. The hands are what join Hero and Leander physically and figuratively to each other. The use of touch, and the association of hands with willed action, provides a cite in the poem to examine the social and asocial portrait of sexuality Marlowe and Chapman give us in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and Chapman's continuation thereof.

The hand holds a special place over other body parts because the hand is often taken as both symbol for the sense of touch in general and as a symbol for

human will or desire in action. The hand also serves as an equalizer between Hero and Leander, in many ways erasing their gendered bodies and replacing them with bodies which are just human and have equal power and agency in the intimate sphere. Hands are, from an early modern viewpoint, what separates mankind from animal-kind and are implicated in constructions of selfhood and personal will. The notion that hands had meaning related to humanist constructions of selfhood which are identities of self that go beyond social roles and birth rites and see every person as having the same essential kind of self regardless of social status, is supported by Elizabeth D. Harvey's essay, "The Touching Organ: Allegory, Anatomy, and the Renaissance Skin Envelope." In her examination of how the sense of touch helps to delineate the boundary of the body in the Renaissance, Harvey looks at how the hand has a special form of touch attributed to it. While discussing the Renaissance anatomy book written by Helkiah Crooke, she writes "[f]or Crooke, the hand is a signifier of domination and reason: to compensate for their nakedness, human beings were given 'the Hand, the great Organ before all Organes, the instrument of all instruments'" (Harvey 88). The hand is once again the privileged body part, given only to human beings, and the special conveyance of our "domination" of our environment and faculty of "reason," and significantly this is common to all, not part of blood-born privilege. Similar to Rowe's remarks about Galen's writings, Harvey writes that in Crooke's anatomy

> The hand distinguishes human from animal and its instrumentality is coextensive with that other differentiating characteristic, upright

> posture. .... The hand is an organ of touch, but in Crooke's anatomy, its relationship to tactility is different from, though imbricated with, the sensing skin. ....tactility, the fundamental sense, the sense contiguous with and essential to all animal life, which is especially pronounced in the vulnerable skin of human nakedness, is paradoxically differentiated from other animals through the concentration of touch in the apprehending and discerning hand. The hand stands for dominion not only over the other animals, but also over the potential for animality with other human beings. (89)

The touch of the hand is special because the hand does more as part of our bodies than the rest of our skin. All skin can feel, but hands are "discerning" and are what makes us human, not only in a comparative anatomy sense, but also because of how they reflect our higher mental faculties in what we make them do Hands are also common to both men and women and therefore convey an equality of agency and power that transcends sex/gender distinctions. Hands represent human control over our actions, and importantly signifies that we have control over the "potential for animality with other human beings," as well as showing that this power is not limited to one gender.

The hand is related not only to a general will in Marlowe's poem, but also more specifically to intention and desire in intimate and erotic contexts. The places where hands have the greatest force of meaning and convey the greatest action are also the most erotic parts of Marlowe's work. To properly contextualize the eroticism of the poem, it is necessary to think through how

Marlowe portrays sexuality and intimacy. The hands carry with them the meaning of touch, and have an import of human agency, but the eroticism and sexuality in the poem is where these meanings become evident. Informing my analysis of the poem's eroticism is an opinion offered by Robert A. Logan in his essay "Perspective in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander.*" He wrote that, "Broadly speaking, *Hero and Leander* is one of Marlowe's several attempts throughout his works to define human freedom in relation to the moral restrictive forces within and beyond humankind" (Logan 280). I agree with this sentiment and would add that in *Hero and Leander*, this discussion of "human freedom" is present in the hands and moments of touch that Marlowe writes in particular. What Logan calls "the moral restrictive forces," which govern expressions of sexuality, I see as what I term the traditional or institutional constraints on expressions of sexuality and intimacy. I agree with Logan that in *Hero and Leander*, Marlowe is putting the intimate experience up against the social constraints that are placed on sexuality. Marlowe's poem violates the permissible social bounds of sexual expression, and allows Hero and Leander to be with each other in ways that focus on their "human freedom" or their ability to choose each other and be intimate equals. For my reading, the way that Marlowe conveys this "human freedom" is through touch, especially as represented by hands. When hands are used to touch, they are creating an understanding of the world for their user. It is not just when we reflect on and think about our experiences that we understand them from a reasoning, human perspective, but also when we touch, for in

touching we make the outside part of us and transform things around us into an active part of our experience.

The touch which Marlowe represents in his poem also relates to how he constructs the intimacy between Hero and Leander. In his book, *Before Intimacy, Asocial Sexuality in Early Modern England*, Daniel Gil discusses how in the early modern period, ideas of intimacy were not as concrete as they are in the contemporary world due to changing social roles, expectations and traditions associated with the legitimate couple. Gil believes that in the early modern period, what he calls "asocial sexuality" was more of a real possibility than it is today because of the change which was occurring. "Asocial sexuality" is a type of sexuality which does not engage in social structures to the point where it does not engage at a level where personhood matters so much as bodies and surfaces; it is linked to the idea of self-shattering which Gil takes from Bersani, and which is part of Bersani's reading of Freud and his response to Foucault's call for a new mode of relationality. This idea of self-shattering is, as Adam Phillips writes in the volume he co-wrote with Bersani, *Intimacies*, "Bersani's abiding preoccupation" (loc 836 of 1132). Bersani's reading of Freud leads him to an understanding of sexuality where "the sexual [is] identified as that which irremediably violates the individual's intelligibility (to himself and others)" (loc 836 of 1132). As Phillips goes on to explain, self-shattering "has been Bersani's word for the ego's darker design in which the satisfaction more truly sought [in a sexual encounter] is a fortifying dissolution not a monumental achievement" (loc 844 of 1132). In other words, what Bersani thinks is that what we seek,

subconsciously, in sexual encounters, is to experience a painful breakdown of our sense of self rather than finding any kind of personal affirmation. While I do not think that Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* necessarily conforms to Gil's thesis where he historicizes Leo Bersani by saying, "early modern sexuality arises when characters are driven together by the emerging modern theory of a universally shared humanity, only to be driven apart at the last moment by the sudden (and, again, historically rooted) resurgence of a sense of essential, blood-borne difference between persons," I see it as profitable to look at *Hero and Leander* from the perspective where l sexuality is possible on more than one social level (informed by humanism or informed by traditional social roles and expectations) and to see in what ways they do and do not take part in the homosocial economy of sexuality that dominated the era and in what ways their desire forms an alternate form of intimacy that emphasizes what Gil terms "shared humanity" over social and cultural prescriptions of behavior (9). In his book, Gil begins by analyzing moments of Bersani-esque self-shattering, but as his chapters go on, he comes to look at more of what I would call the intimate, and therefore I think it is appropriate to look at how Marlowe's poem gives a vision of "shared humanity" in relation to intimacy, even if I do not see it as providing the self-shattering break through of consciousness that Bersani, and at the outset of his book, Gil advocates.

Combined with Gil's ideas about transgressive sexuality and experiences of intimacy I take James M. Bromley's notion that "Various literary texts of the [early modern] period critiqued the consolidation of intimacy around long-term

heterosexual monogamy and instead invested value in alternate forms of intimacy," as applicable to Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (page 1 loc 104). Again, however, while Bromley would have it that these "alternate forms of intimacy" are ones that still seem "alternate" to a modern reader (for instance, Bromley's own chapter on *Hero and Leander* focuses on the Neptune scene), I see in Marlowe's poem a portrayal of intimacy that feels familiar to contemporary understandings of the concept, yet is transgressive in relation to social standards of coupling in the early-modern period. Bromley reads Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* in his book, *Intimacy and Sexuality in the Age of Shakespeare*, focusing on the homoeroticism of the scene with Leander and Neptune, focusing on a Bersani-esque view of "situational intimacy" ; my reading will further Bromley's view of the poem by pointing out that not only does Marlowe represent a transgressive, queer intimacy with the Neptune scene, but he also portrays social intimacy between opposite-gender partners in a way that is at least equally as transgressive because it ignores and defies social expectations of the Couple.

Christopher Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and George Chapman's *Continuation* to the poem show evidence of both sides of the development of social institutions. Marlowe's poem reveals an alternative to futurist intimacy by focusing on the humanity of Hero and Leander and their being with each other, while Chapman's work presents introspective selves who participate in a proto-homosocial economy where marriage (and with it futurism) is the be all and end all of couple-hood. When I refer to "futurist," or "futurism," I am borrowing from Lee Edelman's book, *No Future.* In it, he writes that, if a couple does not

participate in Futurist-Coupleism, the social expectations of marriage, or other socially approved pair-bonding practice, and the production of children as part of that bonding, where

> there is *no baby* and, in consequence, *no future*, then the blame must fall on the fatal lure of sterile, narcissistic enjoyments understood as inherently destructive of meaning and therefore responsible for the undoing of social organization, collective reality, and, inevitably, life itself. (13)

Edelman sees the institutions of, what for simplicity's sake I will refer to as "marriage," as part and parcel of a bigger social structure that forces adult persons to produce a future they will never see, by having children and insuring the "best" for them. If a person or a couple chooses not to engage in the futurist project of society, then they are "destructive," and "responsible for the undoing of social organization" ; the Future is viewed as such an unquestionable good that to engage in any form of coupling or intimacy that does not participate in it is seen as the ultimate evil.

While Edelman's book is mainly focused on how this construction relates to the contemporary gay rights movement and while in the book he mainly looks at films and other sources from the post-WWII era, I believe it is possible to historicize his idea of futurism. In Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, we see a form of intimacy that is not even focused on tomorrow, more or less a broader, reproductive, socially sanctioned Future of Coupledom, and in Chapman's *Continuation*, we see the reaction against this transgressive intimacy through

Chapman's near-obsession with marriage and enforcing the traditional social limits on categories of intimacy. What we have in Marlowe's poem and Chapman's continuation is, then, an example of the fight with futurism, albeit in a more nascent form than in Edelman's examples. I think that what Edelman reads as fully developed in the twentieth century, can be seen in a beginning form in *Hero and Leander*. As James M. Bromley puts it in *Intimacy and Sexuality in the Age of Shakespeare,*

> During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the intimate sphere coalesced around relations characterized by two elements: interiorized desire and futurity. Interiorized desire locates the truth about the self and sexuality inside the body, thereby organizing and limiting the body's pleasures based on a hierarchized opposition between depths and surfaces. Access to futurity involves the perceived sense of a relationship's duration and its participation in legitimate social and sexual reproduction. These changes... laid the foundation for modern understandings of normative intimacy as coextensive with long-term heterosexual marriage. (page 1, loc 94)

Bromley sees in Marlowe's poem a privileging of homoerotic and non-ejaculatory pleasures, conveyed by the centrality of the scene with Leander and Neptune. Bromley cites Edelman here, identifying his mention of "futurity" with Edelman's concept of futurism. Marlowe's poem focuses on alternative intimacies, which are what both Edelman and Bersani advocate for in their work. Because the institutions and concepts related to interiorized selfhood and futurist intimacy

were not fully formed during the early modern period, it is in many ways easier to see the alternatives in work like Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* than it is to imagine them from a contemporary perspective. Of course, it is hard to say whether or not Marlowe intended to show an "alternative" to what was more "mainstream" or was just giving a picture of how intimacy was *possible* in the world in which he lived. I use the terms "alternative" and "transgressive" from a contemporary perspective, and I say it meaning that the intimacy shown between Hero and Leander is "alternative" to how we understand intimacy as permissible in contemporary society, and how Chapman delineates the realm of intimacy (or really of couplist relationality, because a lot of what he describes is less intimate than it is social).

The intimacy which Hero and Leander share partakes in a companionate model of coupling which resists traditional ideas about marriage and the institutional forces governing legitimate coupledom.

Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*

Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* makes it clear to the reader from the moment when Leander and Hero meet that their relationship will be one where touch is central; after Leander kneels and prays to Hero, "He toucht her hand, [and] in touching it she trembled" (183). Leander is not afraid to touch this goddess-like woman, he uses his power of touch as a means to access her instead of a gaze from afar at someone who is too beautiful to touch. Leander does what none of

the other men who come to the festival dare to do in touching Hero He is pushing acceptable social boundaries, but in doing so, shows Hero that she is just as human as he is (by the end of the poem). The boundaries which he is transgressing are those related to courtship and, in an eventual sense, marriage. As David Cressy writes in *Birth, Marriage & Death, Ritual Religion and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*, "[n]o formal ceremonial process guided the path of courtship," however, "[m]atchmakers, go-betweens, brokers, and attorneys played their parts... [and] the freedom of the couple to conclude their own affairs was counterbalanced by the interests of parents, kinsfolk and friends" (234). Cressy goes on to describe how courtship's purpose was to facilitate good matches, that had broad social significance beyond the couple themselves for their families and the broader communities from which they came (252). By choosing to touch Hero directly and immediately, Leander defies the conventions of courtship in the period because he does not consult with others about his choice of love-object.

From this point onward, the poem consists of almost exclusively Hero and Leander; the lack of other people serves to underscore the way in which their actions defy expectations of courtship, match-making, and coupling in general. While the Protestant Reformation brought about a change in the way marriage was talked about in northwestern Europe, associating "the words love and marriage," as Stephanie Coontz puts it, "Western Europeans were still far from accepting the idea that marriage should be based on love and intimacy" and continued to view marriage as more of a social institution than an intimate bond

between people who loved each other and viewed each other as equals (134, 135). The first moment of touch serves to eliminate all the other men at the festival from the action and to create a sort of bubble where the two lovers can just be with and touch each other. Marlowe's focus on the love and intimacy between Hero and Leander, evidenced in their touch, disregards the expectations that coupling would lead to marriage and therefore should involve at least a certain amount of concern for the social implications of one's choice of partner. The only outsider we meet before the end of Marlowe's poem is Leander's father, and even this episode is very brief. Between lines 131 and 138, Leander's father is mentioned and is said to have "mildly rebuk'd" his son for having been with Hero. What is interesting here is how little the father is involved. His rebuke of Leander is mild, and he does not give any kind of indication as to whether or not he approves of this match or whether or not he expects the two lovers to get married. Leander's father is present for this one brief moment, but he does not fulfill any of the socially expected roles of father in it Instead he basically lets Leander do as he pleases.

Marlowe's poem introduces us to Hero through a traditional blazon, where her clothes are described in detail but the only body part Marlowe describes to his reader is her hands. This choices makes Hero's hands important from the beginning of the poem As Cynthia Drew Hymel accurately observes, "Commentators on *Hero and Leander* have long remarked the very different emphasis of the initial descriptions of the two lovers: Hero's stress is a quite exaggerated artifice, while Leander's deals much more concretely with the

qualities which make him so peculiarly - and physically - attractive" (Hymel 274). The difference in the descriptions of Hero and Leander has indeed been the focus of many studies on the poem, but of more interest to me is the fact that, while different in focus and explicitness, the hand is common to both of their initial descriptions; it is what they have in common not only literally, but also figuratively. The common hand in these initial descriptions of the lovers lays the ground work for the transgressive form of intimacy Marlowe will outline in the rest of the poem where Hero and Leander are in many ways equal to each other, and their shared experience is more important than their social positions and roles.

Describing her hands, "She ware no gloves, for neither sun nor wind / Would burn or parch her hands, but to her mind / Or warm or cool them, for they took delight / To play up those hands, they were so white" (Marlowe 27-21). "She ware no gloves," leaving her hands as the only part of her skin exposed; they are the point of contact between her physical body and the outside world. Her hands do not need covered because they are not affected by the elements, thereby showing her body, or at least this part of it, as somehow special or exceptional. The "sun" and "wind" "play upon those hands" in a way which cannot help but eroticize them already. The "playing" here is not innocent or non-sexual, because what causes the sun and wind to desire to play with Hero's hands is their "whiteness" or purity and beauty. The "white" of Hero's hands has two senses of the word "white" behind it, both referencing her "innocent" state and her "fair[ness]" which is being used as "a poetic term of commendation" (OED). "Play" also invokes more than one meaning, referencing both the movement of

the sun and wind against Hero's hands as making the reader think of the other sense of play, "to have sexual intercourse with" (OED). The sexual associations of the word "play" and "white" are here inescapable (and are reinforced by another instance of play a little later describing Leander as fit for "amorous play" (51)). Leander will not then be the first to desire Hero in a sexual way, the sun and wind have gone before him. Hero's hands are here also linked to her "mind" invoking ideas of will and the function and power of hands. Here, Marlowe lays the groundwork for the significance of hands during later scenes between the lovers by putting these associations into the readers mind.

Leander receives a blazon as well, but it is most notable for how it is opposite to Hero's. Leander has a body made up of many parts in Marlowe's description, but no clothes. M. Morgan Holmes eloquently explains that "Unlike Hero, Leander is fleshed out in delectable fullness for our approval" (158). His assessment is right on the mark; Leander's description is delectably fleshy and begs us to join the narrator is in judgment that Leander is extremely beautiful. Leander's physical, naked body is objectified and sexualized in detail. Claude J. Summers remarks on this objectification, and how it is important to the poem. He writes

> Part of the effect of the extravagant celebration of Leander's nude body results from its contrast with the blazon devoted to Hero, which focuses not on her body but on her clothing. Indeed, as Gregory Bredbeck has suggested, Marlowe's employing the blazon technique to fetishize the masculine subject has the effect of interrogating the naturalness of desire

> itself, including especially heterosexual desire. The blazon establishes Leander as sexual object as well as subject; moreover, the objectification of Leander is complemented by the poem's blithe assumption of a universal homoerotic impulse, which similarly interrogates dominant cultural assumptions. (135)

Summers' assertions explain why the blazon motif is significant. By using a technique generally used to describe women in Petrarchan poetry, the poet of *Hero and Leander* is pointing to the ways in which a man can be viewed in much the same way as a woman: objectified, sexualized, fetishized. Talking about Leander as if he were a woman also serves to show what he and Hero have in common in terms of sexuality and desirability; one is not lesser than the other in terms of beauty. Leander's beauty is more bodily than Hero's, which forces the reader to think about a man in the same objectified way that women are more often thought of; this is part of what Summers is talking about above. Summers' "universal homoerotic impulse" is the impulse, liberated by Marlowe's words in this passage, to view Leander as sex object. This in turn "interrogates dominant cultural assumptions" by putting the reader into a position where Leander is the object of desire. The cultural assumptions which Marlowe forces his reader to examine are not just those of who can be the object of desire but also those of where the differences between man and woman really are and in what ways an appreciation of physical beauty can erase the conventional assumptions about what makes men and women different. The hands that both blazons share are again significant because they are the body part which men and women not only

share but can use in the same way. The beautiful hands of Hero and of Leander show that male and female sexual beauty cannot only be described in the same way, but are often the same thing. The description of Leander does two things then: first, it plays with convention and sets up an expectation in the reader that the rest of the poem may not follow his expectations and second, the description further emphasizes how men and women do have commonalities, by not limiting the place of beauty-object to the woman in the poem, Marlowe opens the path for an understanding that, by analogy, the subject position is not limited to the man, and that the two lovers are more equal in this work than convention would have it.

A close examination of the details Marlowe writes for Leander's blazon clarifies the difference between how the reader should view Hero and how she should view Leander. Hero's hands were described, but when Marlowe writes of Leander, he describes his "dangling tresses," "arms," "body," "hand," "neck," "breast," "white belly," "that heavenly path... / That runs along his back," "eyes," "cheeks," "lips," and "brow" (Marlowe 55, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66, 68-69, 72/85, 73/85, 86). Not only is Leander a body, subject to the sexual gaze of the poet, but he is also noted as being "beautiful and young" and as "made for amorous play" (Marlowe 51, 88). Leander's description is not what is conventionally given to a man. His body, not his mind, character or social standing, is the focus and this body is incredibly sexualized and eroticized. This sexualization puts Leander on the same level as Hero, obliterating the importance of social standing in the process, because it defies the reader's expectations and forces him to look at

Leander as he expects to (and does) look at Hero. Interestingly, Leander's "hand" is noted as somehow sexual, but in a much less subtle way than Hero's "white hands" were. Line 62 reads, "jove might have sipped nectar from his [Leander's] hand." As the textual note in the Cheney edition of *Hero and Leander* points out, "the reference is to Ganymede, the boy-god who bore Jove's cup of nectar, divine drink of the gods" (197). This seems a very reasonable role for Leander to play, since he is exceptionally beautiful amongst men, just like Ganymede. The reference in this line also draws connections for the reader to the later scene where Neptune actually mistakes Leander for Ganymede and attempts to slight Zeus by making Ganymede his own sexual conquest too. The mention of Leander's resemblance to Ganymede here is foreshadowing the Neptune scene while emphasizing the exceptionalness of Leander's beauty likening him to Zeus's lover and a god-like figure. This also distances us further from the traditional and institutional outlines of the place of a lover, where social roles and positions would matter more than bodies, by indicating homo-eroticism as part of the erotic landscape of this poem, but not relating it to a woman and therefore removing it from the conventional power-dynamics of homosociality. The conventional power dynamics of triangulation in homosocial structures are explained by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in her book, *Between Men*. She explains how in many social situations where there are two men competing for a woman, the woman is used as a conduit for the men's desire for each other, often their sexual desire for each other, in a way that ignores the woman's self but makes male-male desire socially acceptable by channeling it through the body of a

woman. Leander's confrontation with Neptune avoids the triangulation through a woman that is common of many portrayals of male-male desire. Here, Marlowe represents male-male desire directly, in a non-triangulated fashion, allowing it to stand on its own as part of the erotics of the poem.

Hands are, crucially, the first point of physical contact between Hero and Leander: "He touched her hand, in touching it she trembled: / *Love deeply grounded hardly is dissembled*. / These lovers parled by the touch of hands; / True love is mute, and oft amazed stands" (Marlowe 183-186). Like the sun and wind who touched her hands earlier, Leander now touches Hero's hand. The touching of hands shows that their love is "deeply grounded" and cannot be "dissembled" or concealed. This moment is also part of the transgressive portrait of intimacy Marlowe paints, because the power of their hands is equal and it focuses on how their humanity, synechdoched by the hand, is what is so attractive and provides their connection. The hand and act of touching takes on even greater significance because it is through this action that Hero and Leander "parled[1]" of their desire for each other. The hand then is uniting their their will, expressed through the idea of talking, and their bodies, evidenced by the physical touching of their hands. They are "mute" yet still communicate their love and desire for each other through the touching of their hands. The hand here is key, because it is the only body part which does more than just engage in physical processes, it is the organ through which human will and intention is enacted. Touching hands is a very intentional action, and therefore it is also very

[1] parle, v. : "to speak, to talk" (OED)

meaningful. The eroticism of these lines, reflected in how Hero "trembled" (one might assume with desire) is created by the union of intent with physicality; because the hand is the privileged body part, the love expressed through their touch is privileged and made real. The touch of hands turns the imagined erotic feelings and desires into a corporeal reality. The parlance of this action is reflective of this union of mind and body and through their touching affirms the mutuality of their erotic desires. Their mutual touch creates a non-traditional kind of intimacy because it does not permit the interference of the other people and their expectations of how lovers should behave. In fact, there are barely any other people mentioned in Marlowe's poem, a fact which contributes not only to the portrayal of intimacy, but also to the reader's perception that what Hero and Leander are doing does not engage in traditional roles.

Showing another side of the social power of touch, the hand is mentioned again when Leander is making his speech against chastity to Hero. He says "To expiate which sin [against Venus], kiss and shake hands, / such sacrifice as this Venus demands" (Marlowe 309-310). "Kissing" and "shaking hands" seem here to both be used in the sense of making an agreement, in this case an agreement to repent Hero's sin against Venus.[2]

The sin against Venus is remaining chaste, and the agreement to repent is an agreement to have sex. The sacrifice is virginity. The hand is once again a

[2] For an in-depth discussion of how the handshake came to be, see *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, by Edward Muir, Cambridge University Press, 1997. Suffice it to say for the purposes of this paper, the shaking of hands has been part of agreement-making since the middle ages where it was part of many investiture ceremonies, through the early modern period where it became part of what Muir calls "the new manners," and increased in popularity from there to the ubiquitous place it has in social exchanges today.

privileged body part, it is also again enacting will through action. Human will is again conveyed through the hand, encouraging Hero to abandon her socially constructed role and engage Leander in an asocial realm where just each other, just touching is enough to make love real. To make an agreement verbally is one thing, but to cement it by shaking hands makes it more real, more significant. The hands that take part in the hand-shake enact the participants desire to agree to something. The double emphasis on hands and an agreement again shows the human nature of Hero and Leander's affair.

Ignoring his father's reprimand, Leander chooses to feed "the sparkles new begun" of his feelings for Hero and he journeys to Hero's tower for a second time (622). He has chosen his intimate love over his traditional obligations to submit to his father. When the lovers meet again, the narrator tells us to "look how their hands, so were their hearts united" (Marlowe 511). This image again tells us that the hand is a sight of union. The physical hands are here intertwined, as well as the metaphorical hearts, the hand again acting in a synecdochal way, making this another instance where internal desire is conveyed through external physical action in the hands. The hands are representative of emotional entanglement. The joining of Hero and Leander's hands in this comparison emphasizes the will of their desire for each other and their deliberate action. They are choosing each other and to love each other in an asocial way that ignores other obligations and expectations and again emphasizes their humanistic choice of each other. By uniting their hands before their whole bodies, the union of their hearts is willed and rational rather than animalistic. They are controlling their desire and making

it human by using their hands before their other body parts. This shows that they are controlling their sexuality in a positive way that means they are not just giving in to lust and are actually willing their actions, which makes their union a positive thing from a certain perspective, one that values companionate, equal relationships, even if it defies traditional expectations of marriage, etc.

Hands and touch continue to be significant in Leander and Hero's enjoyment of each other. Two further mentions of hands, while separated in the text by some 200 lines need to be, in my mind, looked at together. This is because many essays on *Hero and Leander* discuss the image of a bird being strangled that happens to be the final mention of hands in the poem. This image is generally used to support arguments saying that the consummation of Hero and Leander's relationship is violent in a bad, non-consensual way. John Leonard noted that

> The notion of sexual coercion haunts much criticism of *Hero and Leander*," but critics are reluctant to utter the word rape.... Hero's pleasure cannot set ethical questions aside, for it is presented as a humiliation for her and a triumph for Leander. Hero's pleasure is literally wrung out of her, and we are invited to gloat over it and the shame it provokes. (56)

His argument is representative of how this scene has generally been viewed. Other critics seem to feel that the sexual union of Hero and Leander sits wrong, and therefore that there must be something immoral or non-consensual about it. However, in my analysis of the function of hands, and sexuality in an asocial context, it is more than possible to come to a different conclusion about the

strangled bird. The key to my interpretation is that Hero does her own "wringing" of Leander first, and that the repetition of the same verb cannot be accidental. I also feel that it is worth noting that just as critics may be, as Leonard wrote, uncomfortable talking about "rape" in a text, people tend to view descriptions of rough sex as wrong or negative and are uncomfortable talking about it. However, as Ian Moulton writes in *Before Pornography*, "Many people of both sexes who are gentle and caring to their loved ones are turned on by rough sex -- or by its representations. Human sexual emotions are not so simple that they can be neatly categorized and easily labeled" (10). There is nothing that makes rough sex innately non-consensual, and nothing about the bedroom scene in Marlowe's poem that cannot be read as playful, if you keep an open mind as to what is an acceptable expression of sexuality. Taking into account that Hero propositions Leander first, and that she obviously wants him, I am reluctant to view their sexual relationship as non-consensual, and am of the opinion that the sex at the end of the poem is rough either because they enjoyed it or because they were inexperienced in the act and that Hero's "shame" in the closing lines of the poem does not stem from her having sex with Leander so much as it does from being stripped of the ritual and artifice that characterized her at the beginning of the poem and left exposed to the potential social consequences of her relationship with Leander. The shame at the end of the scene is reflective of a realization on Hero's part that, even though Hero and Leander function in their own intimate world for almost the entire poem, the social world, with its institutions and traditional expectations, exists outside her bedroom door and will

be there waiting to judge them the next morning. In this light, her shame is not so much about what she just did as what her actions will mean to others.

Keeping this in mind, a closer examination of Marlowe's words is warranted. He writes, "Sad Hero wrung him by the hand, and wept, / Saying, 'Let your vows and promises be kept'" (Marlowe 579-580). This is after the part of the poem where Hero propositioned Leander, but he did not understand what she wanted in his naiveté and chooses to leave instead. Hero wrings his hand because she wants him to stay. The OED says that one of the definitions of "to wring" is "To clasp and twist (the hands or fingers) together, esp. in token or by reason of distress or pain." Hero is here distressed that Leander wants to leave, so she uses her hand to try to take control of his, to wring a desire to remain out of him. She is enacting a strong personal will in this line. The fact that Hero wrings Leander's hand before Leander is described as "wringing" her is significant because it shows her will is complicit in her actions with Leander. The narrator writes that during the climax of their sexual union, Hero was "Even as a bird, which in our hands we wring, / Forth plungeth, and oft flutters with her wing" in Leander's control (Marlowe 773-774). One important thing to observe here is that the narrator is using the bird being strangled as a simile to describe what is going on, not a direct explanation of it which removes Leander from the "wringing" and makes this comparison one step removed from the action of the scene. Not only is Leander the second one to "wring" something in the poem, he is also not directly doing it, he is described as if he were strangling a bird in his taking of Hero, but it is not clear that Hero is not willing in this scene. The

wringing of hands shows anxiety related to taking part in transgressive sexuality more than it does force in Marlowe's poem, they are distressed by what they are doing because it is impossible to completely remove themselves from the social world and engaging in transgressive practice that goes against socially acceptable, traditional, futurist constructions.

During the consummation scene, hands are again key to understanding the lovers; their hands emphasize the intentionality of their actions and bring the equality of Hero and Leander into view. The hands also emphasize the equality of their bodies; by focusing on a body part that is common to both genders, Marlowe's words make the gendered-ness of Hero and Leander's bodies unimportant. What takes place between the sheets does not rely on the gendered difference of Hero and Leander, but rather on the genderless sameness of their hands. The first of the instances where hands are mentioned during this scene is when Leander, "His hands he cast upon her like a snare" (Marlowe 743). This reference brings together the tool using and tool making faculties of hands by referencing using his hands like something made, in this case, a snare. We can see the control that human hands represent, here being used to either make or use a tool. A "snare" is literally a trap, made of string, used for catching animals, but it also has figurative connotations. These connotations associate the word snare with the sin of lust (OED). Here, Marlowe is playing with the idea of the trap of sin in Hero and Leander's actions. The tone of this part of the poem is playful, not menacing or condemning. This reference also foreshadows the line, "Even as a bird, which in our hands we wring, / Forth

plungeth, and oft flutters with her wing," because the bird whose neck is wrung in the second line could be the one caught in the "snare" Leander makes in his hands. Again, the reference contributes to the image of rough sex going on between Hero and Leander.

Marlowe describes Hero's use of her hands in her bed as well, writing, "With both her hands she made the bed a tent" (748). This line shows Hero's agency in the events in the bed. She is creating a space for herself in the bed for herself, where she "in her own mind thought herself secure" (749). Here, Hero is taking agency in the sexual act in a way which contrasts with the "snare" Leander is said to be using. The contrast between these actions show that Hero and Leander are both part of what is going on, one is not winning completely over the other. They are playing a sort of game with each other in bed. The hands in this image are again linked to the power of the mind, because the action she takes with her hands creates internal comfort for Hero. Hero's hands give her back control in this part of the poem where more base urges are overtaking the lovers.

Another scene in the poem is overtly sexual, but does not have the same focus on hands as the consummation scene between Hero and Leander. The scene between Neptune and Leander shows a different type of transgressive intimacy than is shown in the relationship between Hero and Leander. This different focus is because the scene between Leander and Neptune is not intimate, is not about companionate love or equality between partners, is not even consensual and therefore the sexuality Marlowe portrays must be described differently. While Leander is swimming to the shores of Hero's tower, "The lustie

god [Neptune] imbrast him, cald him love" (168). Neptune, who seems to not just be in the sea here, but also embodies all the water around Leander, has mistaken Leander for Ganymede, and is attempting to steal Zeus's boyfriend from him. Even after Neptune realizes that Leander is not Ganymede, he continues to accost Leander as he swims:

> He clapt his plump cheeks, with his tresses played, / And smiling wantonly, his love bewrayed. /He watched his arms, and as they opened wide, / At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide, / And steal a kiss, and then run out and dance, / And as he turned, cast many a lustful glance, / And threw him gaudy toys to please his eye, / And dive into the water, and there pry / Upon his breast, his thighs, and every limb, / And up again, and close beside him swim (665-674)

Neptune's caressing, touching, kissing, and playing with Leander here is, as James Bromely writes, a good example of "short-term, situational intimacy," representing as it does a fleeting sexual encounter between strangers (page 29, loc 675). This encounter, then, presents another transgressive type of intimacy, or at least transgressive type of sexuality, that is less than consensual on Leander's part, and entirely in Neptune's control. The scene is the most obviously transgressive to a modern reader because it shows something that we still consider to be on the edge, or possibly outside the limits of acceptable sexuality and intimacy.[3] Leander is effectively sexually assaulted while he is

[3] I do not wish to say that same-sex relationships are at the limits of what is tolerated in contemporary culture, but rather that the sort of non-consensual, situational, intimacy that is portrayed here is at the limit of what is considered acceptable.

swimming, and while the argument could be made that if there is rape anywhere in this poem, it is between Neptune and Leander, I would like to instead discuss the teaching function of this scene. Leander is very naïve when it comes to the "whats" of sex, yet after his encounter with Neptune, and the story Neptune tells him about the shepard and his boy, Leander arrives at Hero's house knowing what it was he "neglected" earlier (193-195, 65). Neptune's touching of Leander, albeit uninvited, is somehow instructive to Leander, and does away with his naÏveté. The power of Neptune's touch is different from how touch functions between Hero and Leander who are mortal. Neptune has a different kind of power associated with his touching. This scene then, is not just different from the ones between Hero and Leander in that it shows same-sex eroticism, it is also different in the reflected power dynamics: Neptune is a god and Leander a man, Neptune knowledgable and Leander novice. Marlowe's inclusion of this episode serves two functions. It gives the reader an impression that while Marlowe's portrayal of intimacy between Hero and Leander is transgressive, it is not the only way to be intimate or even the only way to work against social constructions of acceptable intimacy. The scene also presents an alternative to the equality and shared experience between Hero and Leander by showing the reader an erotic encounter between two beings who are not equal in terms of power and therefore do not share the same type of intimacy.

Marlowe's poem outlines a transgressive form of heterosexual intimacy between Hero and Leander where Leander and Hero are broadly equal, and disregard their social roles and the traditions surrounding coupledom in favor of

each other. His poem also illustrates another form of transgressive sexuality in the scene between Neptune and Leander where "asocial" sexuality is enacted.

Chapman's *Continuation*

At the end of what is, in Chapman's rubric, the Second Sestyad, and simultaneously is the end of Marlowe's portion of the text, Hero is having second thoughts about what just happened. It is possible that Marlowe meant for the poem to end here, for the ending to be open to the reader's interpretation of the preceding events; it is equally possible that Marlowe met his untimely death without finishing the poem, or that he had abandoned the work at some earlier point. Whichever of these possibilities one chooses to view as "right," it is impossible to discern what, if anything, Marlowe would have written after the lovers awoke. It is, however true that *Hero and Leander* circulated (and is often still circulated) with the *Continuation* George Chapman wrote along with his scheme of dividing the poem into six "Sestyads," (two make up Marlowe's poem, the remaining four belong to Chapman's *Continuation*), and explanatory rubrics at the beginning of each one. Therefore, it is reasonable to look at Chapman's *Continuation* of *Hero and Leander* alongside Marlowe's poem. What is most striking as one turns the page between the Second and Third Sestyads is a remarkable change in tone. This goes beyond the differences in Marlowe and Chapman's style, and has more to do with intended meaning than anything else. Chapman sets out to change the picture of alternative intimacy and individual

connection painted by Marlowe and to put the story of Hero and Leander firmly back into normative social circles. Chapman also brings in the theme of fate in a more definite way than Marlowe did and finishes the story in his own way. Reading Chapman's continuation, with its focus on social roles, it becomes even more clear that Marlowe's poem does something fairly transgressive in its portrayal of intimacy between Hero and Leander. Where Marlowe looked at intimacy, apart from almost all social implication, Chapman looks at marriage and legitimate couple-hood.

The moments of touch in Marlowe's work, and their relationship to traditional social expectations of the couple are in stark contrast to Chapman's *Continuation*. At the beginning of the "Third Sestyad," Chapman points out that Leander "neglected" "Nuptiall honors" in his actions with Hero and that for this he is being visited by the god/dess of "Customes and religious rites" (7, 5). Chapman also figures the touching that has permeated Marlowe's poem as now in the past around line twenty. Here, it is clearly a socially grounded argument that will underly Chapman's poem. No longer are Hero and Leander in their own little world, but Leander must deal with the god/dess of social propriety, and he talks to his sister right away about everything. He then faces the goddesse Ceremonie who lectures him about premarital sex, etc, and tells him he has to get married for this to be at all appropriate. What is going on here is that the transgressive intimacy that Marlowe created in his poem is being undone by Chapman, as Chapman forces the lovers back into the traditional realm of relationality. Even Hero gets a "matron" whom she has to deal with back in her

temple. Hero's crisis over the loss of her virginity has a heavily social aspect to it as well, because she is questioning what is good and right between society's standards and her own.

In his book, *Intimacy and Sexuality in the Age of Shakespeare*, James M. Bromley discusses the question of Marlowe's intentions in relation to Chapman and Blunt's continuations of the poem. As he explains how he believes Marlowe's poem shows the relationship between narrative and sexual consummation, Bromley writes, "Near the beginning,... Marlowe differentiates his poem from the 'tragedie divine *Musaeus* soong' (52), which follows the lovers to their deaths, and he thereby opens up the possibility that his way of ending the poem has other purposes" (page 33 loc 767). Bromley assumes that Marlowe's poem was unfinished in his book, and the way he reads the poem is largely based off of this assumption. However, Bromley also identifies the extant continuations to Marlowe's poem as participating in different projects to the original. He writes,

> The assumptions about narrative and eroticism that may have guided Chapman and Blunt are part of a set of critical commonplaces wherein the focus on narrative outcomes in making meaning out of texts contributes to the normative sense that long-term, monogamous relations are the only valuable forms of intimate contact and that penetration alone signifies meaningful sexual contact (page 33 loc 767)

While my point about what Marlowe's poem does is not the same as Bromley's, I find his words here useful in terms of forming perspective on Chapman's

Continuation. Where Bromley sees narrative and eroticism, I see traditional social roles and transgressive intimacy. This is not to say that my viewpoint is more correct than Bromley's, but rather to acknowledge that more than one thing is going on in Marlowe's poem. Bromley's chapter on *Hero and Leander* identifies the problem with Chapman and Blunt's continuations as resting in their use of "critical commonplaces," "focus on... outcomes," and emphasis on normative coupling. In regard to Chapman's *Continuation*, which I will examine here, I agree with these problems to a large extent although the conclusions I draw about them will be different. Marlowe's poem consciously played with literary commonplaces in its portrayal of the lovers, focused on the process of desire and let Hero and Leander, to a large extent, just *be* without consideration for the outside forces of normative coupling. What happens in Chapman's continuation, I will show, is that the focus of the story becomes all about the "outcomes," consequences, or ends of the relationship, and the traditional, normative and commonplace elements of love relationships are brought to the forefront, out-shadowing the alternative intimacy Marlowe portrayed.

Chapman's *Continuation* screams "marriage" from the outset; this, in my reading, puts Chapman's work firmly against Marlowe's message of intimate coupling outside social traditions in *Hero and Leander*. The beginning of the *Continuation* also puts a sort of cap on the significance of touch in the story. Chapman writes, "By this the Soveraigne of Heavens golden fires, / And yong Leander, Lord of his desires, / Together from their lovers armes arose: / Leander into Hellespontus throwes / His Hero-handled bodie..." (Chapman 17-21).

Leander is portrayed here as leaving Hero's arms, and, significantly, his body is described as "Hero-handled." The past tense here, by the simple virtue of it placing the "handling" in the past, seems to foreclose the possibility that his body will continue to be handled by Hero, the touching that permeates Marlowe's poem will probably be absent from Chapman's *Continuation*. After this, Chapman says that "amidst the enamourd waves he swims," in reference to Leander (Chapman 23). Again, Chapman is making a thematic break with Marlowe. He references the waves as "enamourd," but avoids directly discussing Neptune and his desire for Leander. Chapman quickly erases the alternative sexualities and intimacies Marlowe outlined in his poem in favor of dealing with more normatively-social themes of marriage and obligation.

The first lines of Chapman's *Continuation,* in the Third Sestyad, serve to put the action of this part of the poem in a very different sort of place than Marlowe's Sestyads by focusing on a social world that is bigger than two people. Leander, goes "home to his fathers shore; / Where he unlades himselfe of that false welth / That makes few rich; treasures composde by stelth; / And to his sister kinde Hermione, / ... he all Loves goods did show" (Chapman 66-69, 71). Chapman's description of Leander's second homecoming differs from Marlowe's description of his first in tone and second in the number of other people who are significant to Leander. In Marlowe's description, which I analyzed earlier, Leander's father was fairly insignificant and held no real power of Leander's actions. Here, Leander returns to "his fathers shore," a phrase which indicates that Leander is not in control of the social setting he is now in; the shore belongs to his father,

and what happens here would also, in a way belong to his father, and so his father is brought into the social world Chapman is portraying in a way Marlowe did not. This excerpt also brings in a new character who was absent from Marlowe's poem, Leander's "sister, kinde Hermione." Even in this one person, the social scope of Chapman's poem broadens considerably from Marlowe's because Leander "all Loves goods did show" to Hermione, and Chapman later reflects that she "all his secrets knew" (Chapman 71, 73). In a seemingly innocuous detail, that of adding a sister to Leander's family, Chapman has destroyed the intimate bubble where the action of the first two Sestyads (in Chapman's rubric, these comprise the entirety of Marlowe's poem) took place and puts Leander into a realm of more normal sociality where his family matters in terms of who he is romantically involved with.

Chapman uses the goddess Ceremony to continue his creation of social consequences for the lovers and further reassert traditional views onwhere the Couple should exist. Ceremony serves to further reprimand Leander's affair with Hero, emphasizing how their behavior does not align with acceptable social practice. Ceremony's main task seems to be to convince Leander of the meaninglessness of his relationship with Hero unless they get married and thereby give social legitimacy to their union. Ceremony, "Tolde [Leander] how poore was substance without rites" (157). Chapman's use of Ceremony here forces both Leander and his readers to reevaluate everything that happened in Marlowe's poem. While Marlowe portrays the interactions between Hero and Leander in a positive, almost encouraging light, Chapman brings in a goddess to

redefine what just happened in unequivocal terms. What Ceremony says to Leander makes it so that, no matter how connected he and Hero were, or how much they saw each other as equals earlier, their relationship is meaningless unless they bring it into acceptable social realms of sexuality. This really means one thing, that they have to get married:

> "[Ceremony] vanisht, leaving pierst Leanders hart / With sence of his unceremonious part, / In which with plaine neglect of Nuptiall rites, / He close and flatly fell to his delites: / And instantly he vowd to celebrate / All rites pertaining to his maried state. / So up he gets and to his father goes / To whose glad eares he doth his vowes disclose" (155-161)

Ceremony here, serves as the vehicle for Chapman's redefinition of Leander's character. Marlowe's Leander spent several hundred lines convincing Hero of the meaninglessness of social promises (her vows to Venus as a nun), the relativity of morality and the pointlessness of virginity, arguing that virtue cannot be innate but must be earned through action. The above lines could not paint a more different picture of a man. Chapman's Leander is concerned with his "unceremonious" actions with Hero. The use of the word "un*ceremoni*ous" is important here; Leander's actions were against "ceremony" or "Ceremony," which emphasizes that what he participated in was against the ceremonies (or traditions) of his society. It was offensive not so much on what could generally be called a moral level, but on an institutional one; Leander's transgression was not participating in a social institution. Of course, Ceremony has now inspired Leander to "celebrate / All rites pertaining to his maried state" ; she has fixed the

'problem' through her divine inspiration. Leander's new passion for marriage goes on to replace his passion for Hero in the text, but it does serve to inscribe him further into his social world. Leander "to his father goes" right away, and when Leander explains that he wants to marry Hero, his father has "glad eares." This description puts Leander back in the normative social economy, where women do not matter in relationships. In Marlowe's poem, Leander disregards his father's reprimand, and goes directly to Hero because he loves her. Chapman's continuation shows Leander planning marriage, but with his father, not the bride. Chapman has changed the emphasis of the story from one of innovation in the experience of intimacy, to one where traditional social roles and practices matter more than the woman in the relationship.

It is not just Leander who does some reevaluating in Chapman's *Continuation,* Hero must reexamine her actions and be placed in an appropriate social context in Chapman's work as well. Again, when we meet Chapman's version of Hero, her character is changed and the focus is different: "Sweet Hero left upon her bed alone, / Her maidenhead, her vowes, Leander gone, / And nothing with her but a violent crew / Of new come thoughts that yet she never knew, / Even to her selfe a stranger" (199-203). Hero is described as "Sweet" first and foremost by Chapman, removing her from the erotic descriptions Marlowe wrote of her. The next line exemplifies the change of focus brought about in the Third Sestyad. Chapman writes that Hero is "alone," and thinking about "Her maidenhead, her vowes, Leander gone." The order of these descriptions has meaning here. No longer is Hero part of a together world where

it is just her and Leander, but she is “alone.” This serves to separate what has happened in Marlowe’s poem from what will happen in Chapman’s, where being together is far less important than what happens when both Hero and Leander are “alone” in their separate social worlds. The order of what Hero is thinking about is significant also. Her social role as a woman comes first, by saying that she was concerned for the absence of her “maidenhead,” Chapman is invoking traditional ideas about a woman’s worth and place in society. The second thing in this short list is also deeply traditional, Hero’s “vowes” are what give her a tangible place in society as Venus’s nun and by mentioning them, Chapman is causing the reader to think about what breaking a social promise means, rather than what Hero and Leander’s union meant. Perhaps most significantly, “Leander” comes last in this list. By listing him as the last of Hero’s concerns, the list prioritizes the other social relationships and roles Hero has over her intimate ones with Leander from Marlowe’s poem. Chapman also paints Hero as much less active and much more introspective here. While we get hints of Hero’s introspection at the end of Marlowe’s poem, Chapman’s comment that Hero was “even to her selfe a stranger,” is just the beginning of what will be a long discussion of Hero’s own internal considerations of what happened last night.

Hero’s introspection is Chapman’s way of putting her character back into a box that fits in the dominant, traditional social paradigm. Most of the crisis of self which Chapman writes for Hero takes place in the Fourth Sestyad, but it begins in the Third. The nature of Hero’s introspection represents a change in tone and narratorial voice from Marlowe’s poem. Marlowe’s poem showed the reader a

narrator who briefly commented on the actions of Hero and Leander, but had no deep insight into their thoughts or internal selves. In fact, this lack of internal analysis contributes to the alternative intimacy Marlowe shows us as taking places between Hero and Leander. We find out how they feel only by hearing them speak to each other and touch each other; the internal self is hidden. In Chapman's *Continuation*, the narrator is privilege to the inner thoughts of Hero and Leander, and the idea of selfhood is invoked repeatedly, particularly in regard to Hero and her, for want of a better term, identity crisis which is precipitated by sleeping with Leander. Chapman tells us that Hero is reflecting on how "Good vowes are never broken with good deeds, / For then good deedes were bad: vowes are but seedes, / and good deed fruits; even those good deedes that grow/ From other stocks, than from th'observed vow" (351-354). Instead of action (in the form of speech and more physical actions) as Marlowe presented us, Chapman gives us Hero's thoughts. Hero is troubled by what her relationship with Leander means, and she spends a lot of time thinking about it, especially in terms of what matters more, vows or actions (a debate which one would have thought settled in Marlowe's poem).

Much like Leander, Hero is also given a kind of family member in Chapman's *Continuation*. He mentions, "The frighted Matron that on her did tend" (318). This "matron" seems to be, like Leander's sister Hermione, a character invented by Chapman. There is no mention of a "Matron" in Marlowe's poem, in fact, Hero seems to live alone. While the Matron does not do much here, and does not serve a deep a traditional role as Leander's father and sister,

it is interesting to note her presence, because it serves a similar function to the presence of Leander's father and sister. What the Matron's presence forces the reader to acknowledge is that Hero matters to people besides Leander, and that the rest of the poem will not just be about the two of them alone together in an intimate context, but will take place in a much more socially tied and traditional world where others and their expectations matter.

Considering the length of Chapman's *Continuation* in relation to Marlowe's poem, it is perhaps obvious that I could go on and on with examples of how Chapman attempts to re-write Marlowe's meaning throughout the *Continuation*. Even the side-story which Chapman tells differs dramatically from Marlowe's. Where Marlowe had Neptune tell Leander a story explaining how it is sometimes okay for men to be attracted to men, Chapman tells the story of Hymen, and how marriage came to be. After this, Chapman invokes the inescapability of fate over and over, moving to the end and the lovers' untimely demise. His use of fate serves, in a different way, to emphasize tradition over choice. No matter how much Hero and Leander want to be with each other, Chapman's fate will not allow them, because the world beyond the individual is more powerful than individual choice and will in the *Continuation*. The *Continuation* piles instance upon instance where Chapman is telling the reader that what happened in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* must be undone and reinterpreted to make the poem "good."

By length alone, it is possible to see how Chapman is trying to overshadow what Marlowe wrote before him. The *Continuation* is double in

length to the original poem, and in some ways feels like it is trying to do away with Marlowe's transgressive intimacy by brute force, exhausting the reader with heavy-handed rhyme and a needlessly lengthy end to the story in order to erase Marlowe's poem from his memory and make it seem insignificant.

Chapman's *Continuation* of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is not the most enjoyable read, with its heavy rhyme, many diversions from the force of the plot, and sheer length. However, the *Continuation* is interesting from a critical perspective because it differs from Marlowe's poem in tone and subject matter in a rather dramatic way that at first seems to make it dismissible, but on further reflection can serve to shed light on what makes Marlowe's poem unique. Chapman's *Continuation* brings the force of traditional constructions of marriage and socially acceptable forms of intimacy to bear on Marlowe's preceding portrayal of transgressive coupling. Where Marlowe gave us lovers alone, touching, feeling, being intimate with each other, Chapman represents them talking to their fathers, their matrons, preparing for a wedding and being rebuked by the goddess they broke vows to. Whether or not you believe that Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is complete and whether or not you think Chapman's *Continuation* is a fitting end to the poem, it is profitable to look at the two together because Chapman's work gives an indication of how Marlowe's poem was received by readers, George Chapman included. The differences between Chapman's *Continuation* and Marlowe's poem emphasize how Marlowe is presenting a transgressive kind of intimacy that does not engage in traditional social structures.

Conclusion

The way that Marlowe portrays intimacy between Hero and Leander draws attention to their bodies, particularly their hands. Touch comes to be the focus of how Hero and Leander know each other. Through use of their hands, they communicate with each other and become intimate. As a body part, hands are linked to the idea that human beings are masters of their world, that they can use tools, shape things to be the way they want them, learn about things by dissecting, moving, altering, and to the notion that what we feel is a fundamental part of how we understand and come to know something. The link between emotional and physical feeling is also embodied in the hand. All of these concepts are relevant to the emphatic use Marlowe makes of Hero and Leander's hands in his descriptions of their interactions. By using their hands, Hero and Leander enter into an intimacy that is focused on the similarities between men and women, the ways in which human experience is shared and on how personal will and desire is enacted through touch.

This concept of intimacy, focused on personal will and desire rather than on expected social roles and outcomes, which Marlowe gives us in his poem is what I have termed transgressive. I call this a transgressive type of intimacy because it goes against traditional social structures of marriage and socially approved modes of coupling. Hero and Leander choose to be with each other without thought for what their parents will say, what people will think or what this

will mean for their social positions (particularly Hero, she is, after all, Venus' nun). The transgression of this is the individual choice which is made for each other by Hero and Leander. Their choices, conveyed through instances of touching hands, do not follow socially predetermined models of intimacy. The ways in which their affair is not forward looking, and focused very much on the present moment of desire is also transgressive in that it goes against the expectations of futurism and the social institution of marriage that is bound up in this idea. The significance of Marlowe's portrayal of intimacy is difficult to fully understand if the poem is taken in isolation. *Hero and Leander* shows a beautiful moment between two lovers, yes, but it is by considering the poem and its action alongside Chapman's *Continuation* that both Marlowe's transgression and Chapman's conservatism become clear.

Marlowe's transgression, in many ways, opens the door for Chapman's conservative continuation of the poem. Transgression is itself a form of normalization in the Foucauldian paradigm. The notion that what we think frees us, in this case transgressive behavior, is actually what tightens our chains and reinforces the normative institutions we think we are rebelling against is indeed applicable to Marlowe's poem. It is impossible to talk about Hero and Leander's relationship without comparing it to traditional institutions; there is no way to define it except in opposition to conventional marriage. Chapman's continuation of the poem puts into focus the ways in which Hero and Leander cannot escape the institutions and expectations they resist. Yet, the fact that Hero and Leander's behavior does not, perhaps cannot, completely undo the social

expectations of the couple does not have to change what the poem says or how it means. Marlowe's portrayal of intimacy between the lovers is transgressive, and that observation is true regardless of if transgression does, as Foucault would have it, or does not reinforce traditional power structures. In order to be transgressive, it is not necessary for something to create change, or completely undo existing power and social structures, it must simply resist those existing structures. Hero and Leander engage in a transgressive type of intimacy in Marlowe's poem, and in Chapman's continuation, they are put back into direct contact with the institutions governing intimacy and sexuality of their society. This movement shows how transgression reinforces dominant structures, but it does not make the intimacy Marlowe outlines any less interesting.

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